CourseLink Tools: Intelligent Agents | Transcript Text | Remote Teaching Support W21

Alexa:

This video is intended to introduce you to CourseLink's intelligent agents and how they can be used. Intelligent agents are tools within CourseLink that allows you to look for specific user activity or a lack thereof and send an email to them when it occurs. For example, if a student hasn't accessed the course for a given number of days, you might want to send them an email to remind them to log on.

The advantages of intelligent agents are that they can reduce your workload, standardize your emailing conventions, and keep students up to date with the course material. However, they also have some drawbacks. Editing an intelligent agent will not change or notify any users who were previously flagged. This could cause confusion if users think they need to complete some action that no longer applies to them. Additionally, dependencies are static. That means that if requirements change but the agent isn't updated, it won't track the appropriate activity.

Let's go over an example to demonstrate how intelligent agents can work. First, we choose our criteria. We can choose if this will apply to everyone in the class, or just a specific. We can look for general activity, like logging into CourseLink, or accessing the course; and, we can also look for more specified activity like a dropbox submission to a certain folder. We can add as many conditions as we want and if all of them need to be met, or just one.

Next, we decide what we want to send once these conditions are met and how often we want to send it. Emails can be sent every time a user is flagged by the agent or just the first time. Here's an example of an email that a professor may want to send to a student who hasn't accessed the course recently.

 [Sample email reading: Hello Mx. {InitiatingUserLastName} You are being sent this email because you haven't accessed the PSYC*1000 course since {LastCourseAccessDate}. Several assignments have been posted since then so make sure you are keeping up to date with the deadlines! Best Regards, Your Professor].

You'll notice there are some replacement words in curly brackets. This is generalized format will help you cut down on time emailing. Typically, this would be sent to just the initializing user; but any email can be put in the 'To', 'CC' and 'BCC' lines of the email.

Finally, we have to decide how often we want this agent to run. We can choose to run the agent after a specified number of days, weeks, months, or even once per year. Additionally, we can choose the start and end date we want the agent to run. If we choose no schedule, we will have to run it manually every time we want to use it.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Courselink's intelligent agent tool.

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